



# IMPACT

Encouraging personal growth for CRUDES Sailors and their families

3325 Senn St, Suite 7, San Diego, CA 92136

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*" They started singing an old hymn, singing louder and louder, waiting for the bullets to shatter their skulls "*



## NYIKOLAI S FAITH by Chaplain Andrew Sholtes, CDS 23

The heat and the body odor was so strong and consistent that I still remember it in my nostrils as I think of weeks in the Austrian quarantine of the refugee camp. Triple decked beds, no privacy, women, children, elderly of all nations east of the Iron Curtain were squashed into these old rooms during the time I spent in the camp.

The idea of becoming a minister of the Christian faith was only budding in my heart. Nyikolai's story was probably one of those "signal graces" that God gives to the faithful if He has plans for them. Nyikolai came from Kiev. The pre-Chernobyl suburbs were full of Stalin era factories, now abandoned and desolate. Gangs of smugglers and Christian groups were making good use of these buildings to meet secretly. Communism allowed state sponsored Christianity to exist but church members were on file, never having a chance for promotion or of a noteworthy career. The unofficial Christian groups represented more danger to the paranoid Russian dictatorship than the Mafia. At the time when Nyikolai joined this small group of bible following Christians, the government no longer used overt methods to intimidate religion, but the pressure was still on and the memories of disappearing Christians still vivid.

The twenty or so believers met in a basement of an old administration building always on a different night as to not become suspicious to their non-Christian friends and relatives. The people of the "Rodina" were trained well in the last three generations to be spies and informants in exchange for imagined favors of the KGB.

One night two soldiers burst into the room, weapons drawn and trained on them. They ordered every one to stand with their toes and noses touching the wall and their hands behind their heads. The familiar posture from my time in Hungary seemed to be international in communism. The soldiers had the green epaulettes of the KGB. They were furious.

After the brutal, loud shoving and pushing of all members up against the wall they gave them an ultimatum. There were only the two of them and thus had no means to track all these folks or arrest them. They screamed at them to spit on the make shift cross on the dusty table and denounce their faith in Christ. If they did, they could leave, if they did not, they would be shot. The haunting images of martyred Christians in the past 60 years came to everybody's mind but no one moved.

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### To All Ye Pilgrims

Inasmuch as the great Father has given us this year an abundant harvest of Indian corn, wheat, beans, squashes, and garden vegetables, and has made the forests to abound with game and the sea with fish and clams, and inasmuch as He has protected us from the ravages of the savages, has spared us from pestilence and disease, has granted us freedom to worship God according to the dictates of our own conscience; now, I, your magistrate, do proclaim that all ye pilgrims, with your wives and little ones, do gather at ye meeting house, on ye hill, between the hours of 9 and 12 in the daytime on Thursday, November 29th the year of our Lord 1623 and the third year since ye pilgrims landed on ye pilgrim rock, there to listen to ye pastor and render thanksgiving to ye Almighty God for all His blessings.



William Bradford  
Governor of Plymouth colony, 1623



## The Power of Your Actions

One day, when I was a freshman in high school, I saw a kid from my class was walking home from school. His name was Kyle. It looked like he was carrying all of his books. I thought to myself, "Why would anyone bring home all his books on a Friday? He must really be a nerd". I had a quite a weekend planned (parties and a football game with my friend). So I shrugged my shoulders and went on.

As I was walking, I saw a bunch of kids running toward him. They ran at him, knocking all his books out of his arms and tripping him so he landed in the dirt. His glasses went flying, and I saw this terrible sadness in his eyes.

My heart went out to him. So, I jogged over to him and as he crawled around looking for his glasses and I saw a tear in his eye. As I handed him his glasses, I said, "Those guys are jerks. They really should get lives." He looked at me and said, "Hey thanks!". There was a big smile on his face. It was one of those smiles that showed real gratitude. I helped him pick up his books and asked him where he lived. As it turned out, he lived near me so I asked him why I had never seen him before. He said he had gone to private school before. I would have never hung out with a private school kid before. We talked all the way home and I carried his books. He turned out to be pretty cool kid. I asked him if he wanted to play football on Saturday with me and my friends. He said yes. We hung out all weekend and the more I got to know Kyle, the more I liked him. And my friends thought the same of him. Monday morning came, and there was Kyle with the huge stack of books again. I stopped him and said, "You sure are gonna build some serious muscles with this pile of books everyday!" He just laughed and handed me half the books.

Over the next four years, Kyle and I became best friends. When we were seniors, we began to think about college. Kyle decided on Georgetown, and I was going to Duke. I knew that we would always be friends and that the miles would never be a problem. He was going to be a doctor, and I

was going for business on a football scholarship. Kyle was valedictorian of our class. I teased him all the time about being a nerd. He had to prepare a speech for graduation. I was so glad it wasn't me having to get up there and speak.

Graduation day, I saw Kyle. He looked great. He was one of those guys that really found himself during high school. He filled out and actually looked good in glasses. He had more dates than me and all the girls loved him! Boy, sometimes I was jealous. Today was one of those days. I could see that he was nervous about his speech. So, I smacked him on the back and he gave me that look (the really grateful one) and smiled. "Thanks" he said. As he started his speech, he cleared his throat and began.

"Graduation is a time to thank those who helped you make it through those tough years. Your parents, your teachers, your siblings, maybe a coach... but mostly your friends.

I am here to tell all of you that being a friend to someone is the best gift you can give them. I am going to tell you a story."

I just looked at my friend with disbelief as he told the story of the first day we met. He had planned to kill himself over the weekend. He talked of how he cleaned out his locker so his Mom wouldn't have to do it later and was carrying his stuff home. He looked hard at me and gave me a little smile. "Thankfully, I was saved. My friend saved me from doing the unspeakable."

I heard the gasp go through the crowd as this handsome, popular boy told us all about his weakest moment. I saw his Mom and Dad looking at me and smiling that same grateful smile. Not until that moment did I realize it's depth. Never underestimate the power of your actions. With one small gesture you can change a person's life. For better or for worse. God puts us all in each other's lives to impact one another in some way.



**"Friends are angels who lift us to our feet  
when our wings have trouble remembering  
how to fly."**





## The Big Deal About Kids By Chaplain William Holiman, CDS 21

Having kids is a big deal. It's a bigger deal than almost any other deal you can imagine. According to recent studies, it will cost you something like \$185,000 to raise one. But that is only the beginning of the story...

If you thought being married was intense, if you thought being underway and not being able to get to bed when you want was tough, just wait 'til you have kids! They are relentless! They are totally self-centered. They will consume your time, your energy, your money and will make demands on you that the Navy wouldn't even consider. How do I know this? Because I have impeccable credentials.

First, I was a kid. I can tell you what I cost my parents in both money (does it really cost THAT much to fix that small dent in the car?!) and in time.

Second, I have three kids ages 10-15 years old. I can tell you how MUCH they cost.

Third, I have a wife (of 20 years, thank you very much) and I can tell you what impact those kids had on her. She got pretty worn out when they were younger. Yes, they need to be changed, fed and carried to all sorts of activities. Somebody has to play with them. Sometimes it seems like a tag team match just keeping up with them. Plus, even though I am a great dad, I can't always be there. So think about your spouse.

Fourth, all those things listed above can cost your marriage. The time you spend cleaning up after kids is time you don't have for each other. The money you spend on them came from somewhere—and energy? What energy? Well, after all that time spent chasing little "Tommy", you'll be lucky if you have the energy to collapse!

So, do I recommend having kids? **YOU BET I DO!** The Bible says they are an "inheritance from the Lord" and the joy outweighs all the costs. You see, they help you grow up. The reason they cost so much is because you love them. You may not be the most skilled at raising kids or think you have all the talents but when you see those little eyes and that little cone head when they are newborns, you will just fall in love with them. They will teach you things you never understood before. They will make you slow down and be less self-centered yourself. They will bring you into a world of PTA, school pageants, and maybe even Sunday School. They will have you angry one minute and laughing the next then crying after that. You will reconnect with your parents and you'll open your mouth and it will be your mother speaking. And that is just the beginning. I remember the birth of my children as if it were today. I laughed, I cried, I held them in my arms. I wouldn't trade that for anything. (Even if I do spend 105% of what I make nowadays!)



## NYIKOLAI S FAITH (continued)

A warning shot was fired which, in the confined concrete room, sounded much louder than usual. It made the men flinch and the women scream. A couple with four children at home hesitantly came forward, hands still behind their heads, and spit a dry spit in the directions of the cross while denouncing their faith. They mumbled something about their kids at home and not making them orphans. As they left the basement, the group strained to hear what awaited them upstairs.

When they heard no scuffles, no signs of walking into another group of KGB, one after the other spat on the cross. Nyikolai's heart was echoing the word of Jesus, "If you denounce me before men, I will denounce you before my Father..." Soon only the lay minister and he remained standing against the wall. Everyone had a good excuse to live another day for the sake of an old parent or sick Uncle. A last warning was yelled at the two men standing resolutely. But they would not reject their Savior.

They started singing an old hymn, singing louder and louder, waiting for the bullets to shatter their skulls but the bullets never came. They heard the clatter of the rifle butts on the concrete floor instead.

Then the words came from the two hard core KGB soldiers, "All right, brothers, let's sit down and worship God. We just wanted to make sure that everybody who stayed was a REAL Christian." In the KGB they don't fire people having found out their religious affiliation, they and their family get interrogated, tortured, and then executed. They had a lot at stake to have one worship service with no "moles" in the congregation.

Many years later, as a pastor, I often looked around during the worship service wondering: How many of these good church members would stay at the price of dying and how many would leave?

Looked around your church and search your own heart then ask yourself the same question.



## Regional Support Organization

3325 Senn St, Suite 7, San Diego, CA 92136

### Not Supported is Defeated!

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Do you have an article or question you would like to see addressed in the IMPACT? Please contact us at 556-0464 or e-mail us at 01g12@rso.navy.mil



## Lay Leader Training

0930-1130 General training

1300-1530 Protestant training

October 25 (No training in Nov/Dec)

Denominationally specific training can be arranged by calling RSO at 556-0464.

## **CREDO Schedule for 2000**

Chaplain's Religious Enrichment Development  
Operation retreat schedule for Oct-Dec 2000:

Personal Growth Retreat: Oct 19-22

Nov 16-19

Dec 7-10

Spiritual Growth Retreat: Nov 10-12

Marriage Enrichment Retreat: Oct 13-15

Please call 532-1437 for more information.

## Know your chaplains...



RSO	LCDR Matthew Warnke	556-0464
CDS 1	LT Myung Kim	556-5369
CDS 7	LT Randy Mortenson	545-3026
CDS 21	LT Bill Holiman	545-2082
CDS 23	LT Andrew Sholtes	517-2288
USS ANTIETAM	LT Philip King	556-4665
USS BUNKER HILL	LT Dan Link	DEPLOYED
USS MOBILE BAY	LTJG Ted Williams	556-4578
USS LAKE CHAMPLAIN	LT George Bradshaw	556-4485
USS PRINCETON	LT Michael William	556-3904
USS SHILOH	LT Michael Hall	DEPLOYED

## Free Marriage Workshop

**PREP (Prevention and Relationship Enhancement Program):** is a 2 day workshop that focuses on improving communication in marriage, while also highlighting other aspects of a strong loving relationship. Couples spend the bulk of the workshop listening to presentations and practicing skills with each other. You must be married or engaged to attend and both partners must attend. The workshop is scheduled for November 9 & 10, 2000 from **0800-1600**.

If you are interested in attending this workshop, please call 556-0464 to register.

